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R 031148Z SEP 71
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9556
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC
AMCONSUL DANANG
USDEL FRANCE
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
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SUBJ: KY, POLITICAL PARTIES REACT TO THIEU'S SPEECH SEPTEMBER 2

1. SUMMARY. IN A PRESS CONFERENCE SEPTEMBER 3 VICE PRESIDENT KY CRITICIZED PRESIDENT THIEU'S SEPTEMBER 2 ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENT TO PROCEED WITH AN UNCONTESTED ELECTION. CLAIMING THE ELECTION WOULD BE "MEANINGLESS," AND POSED AN EXTREME DANGER FOR THE COUNTRY, KY SAID THAT THE PEOPLE COULD NOT ACCEPT ANOTHER TERM FOR THIEU. ALSO, SEPTEMBER 2 KY HELD A RECEPTION FOR ABOUT 50 OPPOSITION POLITICAL FUGURES AND SEPTEMBER 3 EVENING HE WAS SCHEDULED TO HAVE A MEETING WITH AMERICAN REPORTERS. IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT, 11 GENERALLY MINOR POLITICAL PARTIES AND GROUPS, INCLUDING SEVERAL NOMINALLY PRO-ADMINISTRATION ELEMENTS, ISSUED A JOINT COMMUNIQUE ON SEPTEMBER 3 EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO THIEU'S DECISION TO RUN UNOPPOSED AND DEMANDING THAT HE RESIGN AND THAT NEW, FAIR ELECTION BE ORGANIZED. END SUMMARY.

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2. KY COMMENTED ON THIEU'S SEPTEMBER 2 ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENT AT A PRESS CONFERENCE WITH VIETNAMESE REPORTERS THE MORNING OF AUGUST 3. ACCORDING TO NOTES OF A VOA STRINGER PRESENT AT THE SESSION, KY DESCRIBED THE ELECTION AS "MEANINGLESS." KY SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT VOTE ON OCTOBER 3 AND ASSERTED THAT THE BALLOTING WOULD BE NEITHER AN ELECTION, WHICH REQUIRES AN OPPONENT, NOR REFERENDUM, WHICH HE ALLEGED WAS UNCONSTITUTIONAL.

3. KY STATED THAT IF THIEU CONTINUES TO PURSUE HIS COURSE OF ACTION, IT WILL BE DANGEROUS FOR THE COUNTRY, AND WILL LEAD TO A DICTORIAL SYSTEM. HE ASSERTED THAT THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE WOULD THEN HAVE TO FIGHT NOT ONLY A "COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP MRTSIDE SOUTH VIET-NAM BUT ALSO A NATIONALIST DICTATORSHIP WITHIN." KY STATED THAT HE "COULD NOT PREDICT WHAT TROUBLES WILL TAKE PLACE AS A RESULT OF THIEU'S DECISION," BUT POINTEDLY REMINDED LISTENERS THAT "WHENEVER THE ENDANGERED NATION NEEDS MY PRESENCE, I WILL BE READY."

4. KY ALSO NOTED THAT HE COULD NOT PREDICT WHETHER THE US WOULD TERMINATE ASSISTANCE TO VIET-NAM BUT EMPHASIZED SELF-RELIANCE AND THE NEED "TO ACT BY OURSELVES TO SAVE OURSELVES." KY REFUSED TO DISCLOSE THE DETAILS OF HIS RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH AMBASSADOR BUNKER.

5. RESTATING CAMPAIGN THEMES, KY AGAIN CALLED FOR SOCIAL REFORM, AN END TO CORRUPTION AND AN ECONOMIC POLICY BASED ON AUSTERITY AND AIMED AT SELF-SUPPORT. KY ALSO URGED A STRONG GOVERNMENT WITH POPULAR SUPPORT WHICH "COULD BE IN A POSITION TO ACCEPT AN OPEN CHALLENGE FROM THE COMMUNISTS IN THE SOUTH..."AND"...ALLOW THE COMMUNISTS TO RETURN HERE UNDER THEIR OWN LABEL..." KY STATED HOWEVER THAT A "CHANGE OF LEADER" IS A BASIC CONDITION FOR SUCH DEVELOPMENTS, AND PREDICTED "THAT IF THIEU STAYES IN POWER SVN WILL REQUIRE EIGHT MORE YEARS TO BECOME STRONG" ADDING OMINOUSLY THAT "THE PEOPLE WON'T BE ABLE TO BEAR ANOTHER EIGHT YEARS." RECALLING HIS DEMAND THAT THIEU RESIGN AND LET SENATE CHAIRMAN HUYEN ARRANGE NEW ELECTIONS, KY REPORTEDLY SAID "THE GENERALS HAD PLEDGED TO HIM THAT THEY WOULD STAY OUT OF POLITICS AND KEEP THE MILITARY SITUATION UNDER CONTROL IN THE EVENT THAT HUYEN TAKES OVER THE GOVERNMENT FOR A THREE-MONTH PERIOD."

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6. KY ANNOUNCED THAT HE WILL HOLD A MEETING THE EVENING OF SEPTEMBER 3 WITH AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS, WHERE HE PROBABLY WILL PROVIDE AN ENGLISH VERSION OF HIS REACTION TO THIEU'S DECISION. KY ALSO HELD A RECEPTION FOR ABOUT 50 OPPOSITION FIGURES AND POLITICAL GROUPS SEPTEMBER 2. SO FAR WE HAVE NO DETAILS ON THIS MEETING BUT PRESUMABLY KY IS ATTEMPTING TO UNIFY -UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP - THIEU'S INCREASINGLY NUMEROUS CRITICS. REPORTEDLY KY IS ALSO ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE SHORTLY A MEETING WITH GENERAL MINH TO DISCUSS COMMON MOVES.

7. IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT ON SEPTEMBER 3, ELEVEN POLITICAL PARTIES AND GROUPS, INCLUDING SOME NOMINALLY PRO-ADMINISTRATION ELEMENTS, ISSUED A JOINT COMMUNIQUE REJECTING THIEU'S DECISION TO RUN UNOPPOSED AND DEMANDING HIS RESIGNATION. THE COMMUNIQUE CALLED FOR THE ORGANIZATION OF "FAIR AND HONEST ELECTION THROUGH A NEW ELECTORAL LAW." THE COMMUNIQUE WAS SIGNED BY THE FOLLOWING GROUPS: ALL THREE FACTIONS OF THE VNQDD, THE VIET-NAM SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (DAN XA, TRINH QUOC KHANH), THE SMALL NEW PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT, THE DEFUNCT NORTHERN CATHOLIC GREATER SOLIDARITY FORCE, THE CATHOLIC CADRES GROUP (FATHER HOANG QUYNH); THE VIET-NAM NATIONAL RESTORATION ALLIANCE (BUI VAN SET); THE PRO-KY VIET-NAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION; THE CAO DAI REPUBLICAN SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY (NOT YET RECOGNIZED AS POLITICAL PARTY) AND THE MINOR PRO-KY FREE FEDERATION OF LABOR. (COMMENT: WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE VNQDD AND THE VETERANS, THE LIST GENERALLY REPRESENTS A GROUPING OF SMALL SPLINTER POLITICAL PARTIES. IT IS NOTABLE MAINLY FOR THE INCLUSION OF SUCH USUALLY PRO-ADMINISTRATION ELEMENTS AS THE GSF, THE NATIONAL RESTORATION ALLIANCE, AND TRINH QUOC KHANH'S DAN XA, AND ALSO FOR THE TEMERITY OF SUCH MINOR ELEMENTS SO OPENLY TO CHALLENGE THIEU.)
BUNKER

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